

But worship is indeed so improbable in  
Itself, and so contrary  
tea'soM\*<sup>11</sup> to experience, that it scarcely deserves  
the serious attention  
fact, which which it appears to have  
received.<sup>1</sup> But when we have  
havefeiiied brushed aside these cobwebs, as we  
must do, we are still left  
to modify face to face with the solid fact of  
the wide prevalence of  
ofthe<sup>llgl0n</sup> mother-kin, that is, of a social system  
which traces descent  
peoples and transmits property through  
women and not through  
tLe°it<sup>P1+1C</sup> men. That a social system so  
widely spread and so deeply  
rooted should have affected the religion of the  
peoples who  
practise it, may reasonably be inferred,  
especially when we  
remember that in primitive communities the  
social relations  
of the gods commonly reflect the social  
relations of their  
worshippers. How the system of mother-  
kin may mould  
religious ideas and customs, creating goddesses  
and assigning  
at least a nominal superiority to priestesses  
over priests, is  
shown with perfect lucidity by the example of  
the Khasis,  
and hardly less clearly by the example of the  
Pelew Islanders.  
It cannot therefore be rash to hold that what  
the system has  
certainly done for these peoples, it may well  
have done for  
many more. But unfortunately through lack  
of documentary  
evidence we are seldom able to trace its  
influence so clearly.

vj 3. *Mother-Kin and Mother  
Goddesses in the  
Ancient East*

Mother- While the combination of mother-kin  
in society with a  
mother^ preference for goddesses in  
religion is to be found as a matter

goddesses of fact among the Khasis and Pelew Islanders of to-day, the Asia.<sup>05</sup> Un former prevalence of mother-kin in the lands where the great goddesses Astarte and Cybele were worshipped is a matter of inference only. In later times father-kin had certainly displaced mother-kin among the Semitic worshippers of Astarte, and probably the same change had taken place among the Phrygian worshippers of Cybele. Yet the older

<sup>1</sup> The theory, or at all events the *schaft*<sup>ii</sup>. (1904) pp. 70-94; his *Cults of* latter part of it, has been carefully *the Greek States* (Oxford, 1896-1909), examined by Dr. L. R. Farnell; and in. 109 *sqq\**<sup>j</sup> and *The Hibbert Journal*, if, as I apprehend, he rejects it, I April 1907, p. 690. But I differ from agree with him. See his article him, it seems, in thinking that mother-  
" Sociological Hypotheses concerning kin is favourable to the growth of the position of Women in Ancient mother goddesses. Religion," *Archiv für Religionswissen-*